

**MADISON COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
MAY 27, 2008**

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by President Ann Schwend at 6:10 p.m.

II. Roll Call

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Ann Schwend, Eileen Pearce, Pat Bradley, Laurie Schmidt, Lane Adamson, Kathy Looney and Dave Maddison.

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: John Lounsbury, Donald Loyd, Dorothy Davis and Ed Ruppel.

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Charity Fechter, Jim Jarvis and Marilee Tucker.

OTHERS PRESENT: Tom Henesh, Marvin Hansen, David Elias, Susan Brown, Ken Brown, David Marsh, Kassie Marsh, Ellis Thompson, Del Bieroth, Robin Bieroth, Keith Hokanson, Wally Bowery, Landon Bowery, Tim Hokanson, Alfred Hokanson and Kevin Germain.

III. Minutes of the April 28, 2008 meeting

MOTION: To approve the April 28, 2008 meeting minutes with four corrections. Motion made by Lane Adamson and seconded by Eileen Pearce. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. President's Comments

Ann Schwend mentioned that she is struggling with the amount of extra paper work distributed at the Planning Board meeting. The paper work was mostly comments from interested parties and having to do with subdivision proposals before the board that evening.

V. Opportunity for Public Comment

There was no public comment given.

The Board took a few moments to read the materials given to them at the meeting.

VI. Public Hearings

President Ann Schwend opened the first public hearing at 6:20 p.m.

A. Preliminary Plat – Ruby Rock Subdivision

Jim Jarvis gave an overview of the project using the plat to illustrate features of the subdivision. He pointed out the findings in his staff report. He mentioned that there had been letters received from surrounding landowners, the Town of Twin Bridges, Sheridan

High School and the Vigilante Canal User's Association. Some were against the subdivision and others offered suggestions as to how to mitigate concerns related to the proposal.

Site Description:

The 98-acre site is located 1 1/2 miles north of Sheridan, Montana, and 1/4 mile west of MT Highway 287. The site is accessed via Tuke Lane, an existing county road. Legally the tract is described as a portion of the E1/2 of the NE1/4, Section 20, and the N1/2 of the NW 1/4, Section 21, T4S, R5W, PMM, Madison County, Montana. This rectangular tract is bordered on the west by the Burlington Northern Railroad and bisected near its eastern border by the Vigilante Canal, used for irrigation. The site, previously used for cattle grazing and hay production, is characterized by well-drained soil and a flat, gently sloping grade. Primary vegetation includes short pasture grasses. The property is vacant except for a few existing commercial storage buildings along the western boundary, a portable concrete batch plant and a fuel transfer station. Adjacent land uses are residential to the north and agricultural to the south, east and west.

Proposal:

Over the course of four phases, the Ruby Rock Major Subdivision will create a total of 63 lots, including 55 single-family and 6 multi-family lots, 1 park lot and 1 commercial lot. The subdivision is located between the communities of Sheridan and Twin Bridges with convenient access to MT Highway 287. As proposed, the subdivision is generally in keeping with current residential and commercial development trends in the area. Existing commercial properties are located along nearby MT Highway 287 and residential development along Tuke Lane is well established.

The developer has stated that his intention is to create lots that would be affordable for first-time and senior home buyers. The single-family lots are approximately 1 acre in size, and the covenants will specifically allow for pre-manufactured and modular type construction. The multi-family lots, averaging 2 acres in size, are intended for duplex-type units to be developed in cooperation with the County's proposed housing program. The proposed 10-acre commercial lot will serve the existing portable concrete plant and fuel transfer station. A 4.66-acre park is planned with a central location for use by the residents of the subdivision.

Road, utility and canal easements are identified on the plat. Primary and secondary subdivision access will be provided by two access points of connection with Tuke Lane. Pedestrian easements are proposed along the east-west internal roads to provide connections to the park area.

The development proposes 1 well for every two lots and individual septic systems. Community water and sewer systems were considered, but deemed too costly for the intended market.

Tom Henesh and Marvin Hansen gave a power point demonstration on behalf of the developers of the property. The power point touched on the following ideas concerning the subdivision:

- Affordable housing for the Ruby Valley
- Development of a neighborhood for future residents
- Walkable neighborhood
- Provide recreational equipment in the park
- Provide for fire fill site for the area properties.

Tom further mentioned that room has been left within the park for possible development of soccer and baseball fields. The playground equipment will be installed along with development of the subdivision.

Public Comment: Agency and Individual Comments

REVIEW AGENCIES	COMMENTS
Madison County Planning	Preliminary plat application complete and sufficient. Geotechnical and groundwater evaluation required
Madison County Board of Commissioners (Road Supervisor)	D. Schulz – traffic flow improvement on Tuke Lane needed, including hardening and widening driving surface and improving the 7M4R Road to withstand increased traffic
Madison County Sanitarian	R. Hamler – DEQ sanitary review underway, proposed well and drainfield location will need to be permanently staked.
Madison County Weed Office	M. Edsall - Weed management plan approved
Madison County Sheriff's Office	None
Madison County – Emergency Management	Chris Mumme – estimated emergency services response times are 10-30 minutes J. Husar – Inspection complete, provisions for secondary emergency egress suggested, 30,000 gallon cistern with hydrant required per Chief Woirhaye (Sheridan), Sheridan VFD lacks a tanker. Mutual aid from Alder or Twin Bridges will be needed. Adds an additional 10-20 minutes to the response time, pressurized hydrant suggested. Proper signage and housing number required, Use of fire resistant building materials recommended.
Madison County Clerk and Recorder	None
Ruby Valley Ambulance Service	Jane Yecny – access to the subdivision is a concern. Two access roads are not adequate for 60+ homes in case of an emergency. Wide

	roads and adequate signage is a necessity. Response time 10-25 minutes depending on conditions.
Sheridan Volunteer Fire Department	Chief Ted Woirhayne – asked developer to assist department in acquiring a 3,000 gallon capacity tanker.
Three Rivers Telephone Co-op.	None
Northwestern Energy	None
Town of Twin Bridges	Thomas Hyndman – concerned about impacts on local emergency services and groundwater, i.e. capacity and contamination
Sheridan School District	None
Montana State Historic Preservation Office	D. Murdo – low likelihood of significant cultural resources in the area. Cultural resource inventory unwarranted.
Montana Department of Transportation-Bozeman	None
Montana Dept. of Fish, Wildlife & Parks, (FWP)	Bob Brannon – several recommendations made to minimize impacts on wildlife.
Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology – Butte	E. Deal – generally stable material, use care in foundation location, faults present in the area, seismic activity possible.
US Bureau of Land Management – Dillon	None
US National Resource Conservation Service	Marni Thompson – concerned about loss of ag production and resulting potential for weed invasion. Recommend re-seeding with dry land grasses. Access for operation and maintenance of the canal a concern. Recommend installation of community septic system to minimize impacts to groundwater, i.e. well-drained soils.

ADJACENT LANDOWNERS	COMMENTS
Mark Mehring	Expressed concern about pipeline easements, fence maintenance, weed invasion, and groundwater supplies. Long term solutions need to be presented.
Robert Graham	Opposed to development due to loss of ag land and impacts of dense residential development on traffic, roads, and groundwater.
Larry Maddox	Concerned about impacts of dense, urban residential development on surrounding rural properties, i.e. noise, groundwater, dust, weeds. Recommend larger lot sizes.
Donald Welborn	Opposed to development due to loss of ag

	land and impacts of dense residential development on surrounding rural properties, i.e. noise, groundwater, and traffic.
LEIN AND EASEMENT HOLDERS / HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATIONS	COMMENTS
Vigilante Canal Users Association	Neil Todd – concerned about canal encroachment, transfer of water rights, lot alignment, and liability.

BOARD DISCUSSION

Subdivision Park

How much of the park will be done in Phase I? *All of it. We anticipate seeding it in Phase I. It will be an irrigated park area.*

Are you going to irrigate the park all at once? *No. We will not irrigate it all at once.*

How are you going to plan for parking for the park? *We will probably put a parking area in the park.*

What other park improvements are proposed? *Playground equipment, off street parking, and other amenities will be installed/constructed as the subdivision builds. Total amount of cash invested into park improvements, estimated at \$20, 530.*

Multi-family Housing

Why is the multi-family housing located across the canal? It puts more traffic and kids across the canal. *We didn't want to hide the affordable housing. There will be two lots, one access.*

There is still a concern with kids and the canal. *That's up to the buyers to control.*

Canal Easement

A fifty foot easement for the canal is skimpy, Tom. *It is fifty feet on either side.*

Can you explain more about the easement documents? *The names on the deed were wrong. Don't know what the (canal users) have done about this.*

How wide is the irrigation canal easement? *A 100 foot wide easement has been created, 50 feet of each side of the centerline*

Fencing

You need to look at the fencing aspect of your covenants. Who will take care of the boundary fencing? *The individual homeowners in cooperation with the adjacent ranchers/property owners.*

The developer needs to take an active role in maintaining those fences. *The homeowners' association, i.e. developer and residents, will work with the neighboring property owners.*

Affordability

How are you going to keep the costs down? *We will allow the Homeowners (Association) to manage that.*

What about any other plans to maintain affordability? *Maybe we could impose deed restrictions for a year or two.*

How does the developer propose to work with the County's affordable housing program? *The developer will sell two lots to the County's housing program at 80% of fair market value.*

This subdivision is supposed to be reasonably priced, but dose systems (septic) are very expensive.

Bus and Turnaround

Will the bus turnaround take away from the two lots? *No. there is room.*

I don't think the school bus will enter the subdivision. We need to clarify this.

Effect on Agriculture

I disagree that this does not have a negative effect on agriculture. It has been used as agriculture up until now and now it won't be. That's an effect.

Weed Management

How are noxious weeds going to be controlled? *The covenants address weed control and the developer will re-seed the property with a dryland grass mix.*

Subdivision Roads

Are interior subdivision roads to be paved? *No. Just up to County standards.*

According to the Madison County Subdivision Regulations, for public health and safety reasons, County road standards for a particular subdivision, can be made to meet a higher standard.

Septic Systems

Have you looked into shared septic systems to minimize land use for them? *It is not feasible; significantly higher cost.*

Did you actually get a bid for or did you look at shared sewer systems? If you did smaller clusters of homes with shared drain fields, the cost would be more reasonable to the buyer. *The result is that you have the same concentration.*

I'm just talking about land use. So you did look at the cost of doing shared drain fields? *Yes. It would not be financially feasible and with significantly higher costs.*

This would be higher costs to the developer? Yes.

Canal and Homes Nearby

I still have some problems with additional families around the canal. Having this area be for the duplex adds more families around the canal. *It doesn't necessarily mean that a duplex will be built there.*

I think we all have concerns about the canal and kids and we've already expressed that. It's kind of up to the buyer.

Community Well

If it's affordable housing, they can hardly be expected to put in community well. We have those two things we desire on the Planning Board, but maybe they don't go hand in hand.

I disagree with that. The developing water system costs a certain amount of money. When you do a community water system, the onus is on the developer to do it and he pays for it and when you do individual wells, the homeowner pays for it. Either way, the homeowner does pay for it. I don't think that it changes whether it is affordable or not. I actually believe that when you are more creative in the design, that the cost can be less to the individual homeowner. Then end result is less money, potentially. If you have to put infrastructure in for a single community water system, or a single community septic system, that is expensive. If you did smaller clusters of homes with shared drain fields, the cost is not going to be significantly more.

Miscellaneous

We appreciate the efforts you have made to improve the design of the project. There is a concern about so many one acre lots. It will be problem maintaining the acre parcels. Additional improvements to Tuke Lane are needed, especially a walking trail and dust control.

Those who spoke at the meeting:

Dave Marsh: He asked that the county make sure DEQ approved the water and septic systems, and other promised improvements were completed before the County signs off on the project. Dave Marsh also asked that the existing Britton Way easement be

carefully examined and confirmed to be 60 feet wide. He also mentioned concern about whether or not Tuke Lane would be hardened and widened for the safety of bicycle and pedestrian use, as well as looking into dust abatement for it. The burden on the Ruby Valley Ambulance is not mentioned. Will there be a need for an additional ambulance and who will absorb the cost of this? Is DEQ certain that this will not affect the groundwater? Does this fit with the County Growth Policy? He mentioned being concerned with “assumptions”.

Del Bieroth: He mentioned concern that the two exits from the subdivision may not be sufficient for the ambulance and other emergency services. The Vigilante Canal has a history of flooding and nothing can be done about it. In the past when cleaning the canal, we haven’t worried about aesthetics and have simply piled up the debris next to the canal.

Patricia Hayes, City Councilwoman from the Town of Twin Bridges: Concerned with the larger subdivisions and overall water use.

MOTION: To recommend approval with the conditions set forth with a caveat that Jim and Charity will sit down with Commissioner Dave Schulz and make sure that he understands some of the concerns coming to the Planning Board about the width of Tuke Lane, a bike trail, a walking trail and the dust conditions on Tuke Lane, at least from the highway to the railroad track. Moved by Dave Maddison, seconded by Laurie Schmidt. Motion carried unanimously.

President Schwend closed the hearing at 7:50 p.m.

PLANNING BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the subdivision application, staff report, proposed Findings of Fact, May 27, 2008 Planning Board Public Hearing, and subsequent review and discussion, the Planning Board recommends preliminary plat approval of Ruby Rock Major Subdivision as proposed and subject to the conditions listed below. In accordance with 76-3-620, MCA, the legal basis for each condition is shown in italics.

[Standard subdivision conditions]

1. Any and all adopted State and County requirements and standards which apply to this proposed subdivision must be met unless otherwise waived for cause by the governing body. *II-H and Chapter IV, MCSR 9/2006*
2. A notarized declaration of “Right to Farm” and “Emergency Services Information” (Appendix R of 2006 Madison County Subdivision Regulations) must be filed with the final plat. *II-H.2 and II-H.4. (a)-(c) MCSR 9/2006; 76-3-611 MCA*
3. The final plat must be accompanied by a certification by a licensed title abstractor showing the owners of record, the names of any lienholders or claimants of record against the land, and the written consent to the subdivision from any lienholders or

- claimants of record against the land. *II-G(c) and Appendix K, MCSR 9/2006; 76-3-612, MCA*
4. All subdivision road and utility easements (or rights-of-way) shall be clearly shown and labeled on the final plat. *II-G and Appendix K, MCSR 9/2006; Uniform Standards for Final Subdivision Plats (8.94.30003, ARM); 76-3-504 and 76-3-608, MCA*
 5. Future modification of any elements shown on the plat may not be made without County review and approval. *IV-A.14 and 19, MCSR 9/2006; Section 27-30-101, MCA*
 6. The final plat shall include a statement whereby lot owners waive their right to protest any rural improvement district (RID) designated by the Madison County to protect public health and safety on public roads leading to the subdivision. *IV-A 9 (a)–(h) MCSR 9/2006; 76-3-608 MCA*
 7. Prior to final plat approval, proposed road names and temporary addresses shall be submitted to and approved by Madison County Planning. *IV-A 9 (k-2) MCSR 9/2006; 76-3-608 MCA*
 8. Prior to final plat approval, temporary physical addresses must be assigned to each lot in accordance with Madison County's rural addressing and Emergency 911 system. *IV-A 9 (k-2) MCSR 9/2006; 76-3-608 MCA*
 9. Upon completion of road improvements and prior to building construction, a permanent address shall be assigned to each building site. Individual address signs shall be erected at the driveway entrances. *IV-A 9 (k-2) MCSR 9/2006; 76-3-608 MCA*
 10. In the event that the road, utilities or other required improvements are not completed prior to final plat submission, an Improvements Agreement and irrevocable Letter of Credit or equivalent guarantee shall be filed with the Board of County Commissioners prior to final plat approval. The amount of the letter of credit shall be 125% of the engineer's estimated cost for the improvements. Any letter of credit or other guarantee must cover the time period needed to complete project improvements. *IV-A 14 (c-2) MCSR 9/2006; 76-3-608 MCA*
 11. The final plat shall include the following statement: "Prior to any construction requiring sanitation, the lot owner must first obtain a Madison County septic permit." *IV-A 16 MCSR; Madison County Sanitarian Regulations; 76-3-608 MCA*

[Specific subdivision conditions]

12. Prior to final plat approval, the developer agrees to cooperate with the county to share the costs of improving Tuke Lane. Improvements identified to-date include, widening and hardening Tuke Lane leading to the subdivision to a standard 24 foot wide driving surface and improving a second approach on to MT Highway 287, i.e.

the 7M4R Road shown on the vicinity map. The extent of these improvements and the actual amount of the developer's contribution will be determined by the local road commissioner and the County's "fair share" program. *IV-A 9,10,12-14 MCSR; 76-3-608 MCA*

13. Prior to final plat approval, the developer agrees to ensure that the subdivision's internal circulation and two access roads are improved to county road standards, specifically a 24 foot wide minimum road surface on north-south circulation routes and a 24 foot wide minimum road surface plus 5 foot wide trail surface on east-west circulation routes, including road signage (see Section E – Roads, Environment Assessment), *IV-A 9,10,12-14 MCSR; 76-3-608 MCA*
14. Prior to final plat approval, the developer agrees to install a 30,000 gallon cistern and dry hydrant. Additional consideration should be made for installation of a pressurized hydrant system or assisting the Sheridan Volunteer Fire Department in acquiring a 3000 gallon capacity tanker. *IV-A 14 (c-2) MCSR; 76-3-608 MCA*
15. Prior to final plat approval, the developer agrees to construct a 4.66 acre park within the subdivision. In addition, to satisfy the parkland requirements of 7.6 acres for a subdivision of this size, cash in lieu of parkland totaling \$20,530 will be invested by the developer in park improvements; including landscaping, irrigation system, and playground equipment (see Appendix 19). *IV-A 17 MCSR 2006, and the MCA 76-3-621.*

Staff Note:

1. New lot owners should be provided with a copy of *The Code of the New West*.
2. In support of the subdivision's affordable housing goals, the developer should consider implementing policies to discourage speculative real estate practices, such as "flipping" or multi-lot sales.
3. Covenants should be expanded to specify fire-fill facilities as an additional maintenance responsibility of the property owners.
4. Numerous members of the public mentioned the critical need for the County and appropriate developers to improve Tuke Lane from the intersection with MT Highway 287 to the Burlington Northern Railroad crossing. Specific concerns include; the width of Tuke Lane, a bike trail, a walking trail and the dust conditions.

B. Amendment to Madison County Subdivision Regulations, Appendix A, Definitions

Charity Fechter describes the proposed changes to the definitions.

Background:

During the review of the Moonlight Basin amended Overall Development Plan it was brought out that the definition of a residential “unit” in the subdivision regulations is ambiguous. Moonlight Basin proposed language to be used in evaluating their ODP that would clarify the intent for their project. Proposed changes were presented by staff and discussed by the Planning Board at the April 7, 2008 meeting. Changes were proposed and a public hearing date of May 27, 2008 was set.

The hearing was advertised in The Madisonian on May 8 and 15. The notice of the hearing and a description of the changes were made available at the public libraries, the Planning Office, and on the County’s website.

Proposed Changes:

Term	Existing Definition	Proposed Definition
Dwelling	(none)	A building or portion thereof used exclusively for residential occupancy.
Dwelling Unit	A residential structure in which a person or persons reside.	One or more rooms for ownership, lease or rent designed, occupied or intended for occupancy by one family and physically independent of any other room or group of rooms or dwelling units which may be in the same structure.

A residential structure in which a person or persons reside.	One or more rooms for ownership, lease or rent designed, occupied or intended for occupancy by one family and physically independent of any other room or group of rooms or dwelling units which may be in the same structure.
Housing for those individuals (and their families) who are employed by businesses providing direct services to a proposed subdivision.	Housing in a development occupied by those individual(s) (and their families) who are employed by a business providing direct services to that development.
(none)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a detached dwelling, semi-detached dwelling, or condominium unit; • a suite or room in a hotel, a motel, an inn, a boarding house or a lodging house or that part thereof that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ is occupied by individual(s) as a place of residence or lodging; or ○ is leased as a place of residence or lodging for individual(s); or ○ is vacant, but was last occupied or supplied as a place of residence or lodging for individual(s); or ○ has never been used or occupied for any purpose, but is intended to be used as a place of residence or lodging for individual(s).

Individual Commercial	Commercial enterprises involve wholesale trade, retail trade, professional services, and/or personal services	Enterprises involving wholesale trade, retail trade, professional services, and/or personal services, whether leased or owned.
Residential Development	(none)	A development that includes at least one dwelling unit, including single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, multiple-family dwellings, fractional fee club units, timeshare units, and condominium units

Comments Received: No comments were received as of the date of this report.
Public Hearing: No comments were made during the public hearing.

MOTION: Amend Appendix A, Definitions, of the Madison County Subdivision Regulations as proposed. Moved by Laurie Schmidt and seconded by Pat Bradley. Motion carried unanimously.

VIII. Pre-application

A. Perkins Mill Gulch Minor Subdivision

Pre-Application: Perkins Mill Gulch Minor Subdivision

Landowner: Lynn Perkins

Developer: David Elias

Engineer: G & E Engineering & Surveying

Description:

Type: Minor - Residential

Size: 98.41 acres

Location: North side of Mill Gulch Road, approximately 4.2 miles east of Laurin. (Tract 2D of COS 7/2019-FC, in W1/2, Section 36, T. 5 S., R. 4. W., P.M.M.)

Commissioner District: 1 – Dave Schulz

Proposal: Residential subdivision of 4 lots ranging from 22.1 to 26.1 acres in size.

Other: The site is directly north of the proposed Elias Mill Gulch Subdivision. Tract 2C in the northwest corner is not included in the subdivision.

Charity Fechter described the proposal and pointed out the features on the vicinity map. David Elias, representative of the subdivider, was present to answer questions from the Board. He mentioned that they have scouted homesites so that they are not built on ridge tops. He will meet with Commissioner Schulz as to fair share contribution for the improvement of county road Mill Gulch Rd.

BOARD DISCUSSION:

Covenants

Will there be covenants? *Probably. Real estate people say it is beneficial.*

Weeds

Weeds should be mentioned in the covenants.

You might consider being proactive about weeds this year. *I will meet with the County Weed Coordinator.*

Road Improvements

Will the subdivisions of Elias Mill Gulch Minor and Perkins Mill Gulch Minor work together on road improvement? *Probably.*

Power Grid

Have you spoken with Northwestern Energy as to the power grid supply and whether or not it is adequate for these new lots? *No.*

The Planning Office should check with Northwestern Energy about this.

Physical Features of the Subdivision

The map shows a slight gully. Could this be a common green area? *We gave the least attractive lots the gully.*

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

The Planning Board asked that a site visit to both Elias Mill Gulch and Perkins Mill Gulch be scheduled

IX. Conservation Easement – Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks/Granger Ranches IIA

Location: Section 4, T7S, R1W, PMM
At the end of O'Dell Creek Road, approximately 2 miles west of Hwy 287 N.

Size: 225 acres

Background:

The Planning Board considered the Granger Ranches conservation easement to The Montana Land Reliance on November 27, 2006. That conservation easement designated the Bottomlands as a multi-year wetlands restoration project area. It was recorded as Document #119654 on April 25, 2007.

The 225-acre easement to Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) lies along O'Dell Creek in the area designated Bottomlands within the larger Montana Land Reliance easement. The additional easement protection is required for the Corps of Engineers to authorize FWP use of wetland mitigation funds in continuing the wetland restoration project on the Granger Ranches property.

It is recommended that the Planning Board confirm that the proposed conservation easement from Granger Ranches to Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks is consistent with County planning and the 2006 Madison County Growth Policy.

X. Old Business

A. Streamside Protection Regulations, status report

Jim went over his summary of the May 6, 2008 meeting, including the names of all of those individuals in attendance. He mentioned that the County was trying to hire a facilitator. Members of the Board questioned why the facilitator was not being paid for by the County entirely, rather than asking for financial help from the community groups. They also mentioned that the Planning Staff should not be in the middle of all of this and that the Commissioners should hire the facilitator. It was discussed that the project did not come from the Planning Board and is taking too much staff time and should be handled by someone outside of the Planning Office.

MOTION: To recommend to the County Commissioners that their office pay for the facilitator and handle the Streamside Protection Ordinance. Moved by Pat Bradley, seconded by Kathy Looney. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Rancho Vista Verde and Ruby Rock Site Tour Notes

While looking at the summaries of the site tours, the Board discussed that Madison and Jefferson Counties should be involved in the discussions regarding Rancho Vista Verde. The Planning Office has received questions regarding the services for the subdivision and which county would be responsible. The Planning Board could deny the subdivision on the basis that an agreement between the counties had not been reached.

C. Norris Hill Wind Energy Project

A hearing regarding the Sagebrush Wind Energy proposal will be held by the County Commissioners on June 10, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. in the Courthouse. Ellis Thompson, neighboring landowner to the proposed towers, was present to ask the Board how they feel about the impacts on the viewshed by such towers. Ann responded that there is nothing in the Tower Ordinance that speaks to this aspect of the proposal. She mentioned that the ordinance may have to be amended.

D. Other

Pat Bradley brought up items recommended by Dave Maddison, re: ditch setback easements and the defining "cluster" developments. The Board asked Charity to come up with language to define "clustering".

XI. New Business

A. Water Policy Interim Group Meeting

Ann Schwend described a meeting regarding groundwater to surface water on the Ruby River, which was held in Helena. The information gathered for this will be looked at and used by a legislative committee on the topic of water.

B. Planning Board Member Reports

None

C. Staff Report Format

Charity reported that she and Jim are trying new things in doing the reports and would like feedback from the Board members as to what they like and don't like.

D. Site Tours

The Board discussed the site tours and recommended that the Planning Staff should run the tours and prepare a format, rather than the developer doing so. They concluded that the gatherings should not be meetings, but more an observance of the land. The format needs to be tighter, not allowing little groups to go off to have separate conversations.

The Board would like a field trip to the Mill Gulch minor subdivisions.

E. Geology Field Trip

The Planning Office will set up a trip with Ed Ruppel when he is available. Kevin Germain would like to be able to go along. The Board was reminded that site tours and field trips are open to the public and are posted as such.

F. Planning Office Report

Charity had included information in the packets, but pointed out that she is budgeting for an 4-wheel drive SUV for the office so that we don't have to beg rides so often when we do have site tours. A lot of the terrain we are going to in Madison County requires four wheel drive.

G. Other

Charity reported on her attendance at the American Planning Association Conference in Las Vegas. Some of the subjects covered at the conference were: takings; affordable housing; land stewardships; creating farming economies; how to pay for growth; difference between fiscal budget and economic impact.

Dave Maddison commented that in regard to protests against subdivisions, that most people objecting are NIMBYS (not in my backyard). If we had available money for funding, we could map out where development should and should not occur.

XII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:47 p.m.

Ann Schwend, President

Marilee Tucker, Secretary